

TO DREAM OR NOT TO DREAM

AL BERSTED

"Life, yes, it is for those who spend not their time in idle dreaming. . . ." Or is it? "Flying through the night, inculcating sight," is this but a dream? This paper in front of you, is it only part of some dream, to disappear in a fog of "was" when dreaming ends? Is there a difference between a dream at night, smugly warm in bed, and being "awake?" How does one *really* know the difference—which is which? Maybe college is a dream, and tomorrow I will wake up to find....

Walking down streets of trees and listening to the buzzing of bees, I walk to a house, and they say, "You louse!" And the next house: "We don't want you Fuller Brush men walking around in our neighborhood. Get out of here before I call the police." The wind gently blows my hair, do I dare? To try yet another, this ugly breed of mother? Yes, it comes about, this time—"Lazy lout!" And these words wake me to find.....

"This is a recording. The number you have dialed is not in service. Click, gazoorr...." "Damn, what are we gonna do now? We don't know what's playing at all the fool cinemas, and I definitely am not staying on this campus tonight. Oh, hell." Take a walk, and we can talk. Stroll to the garden, and I'll ask your pardon. "Am I in a strange mood tonight. I feel like taking a walk. You want to do that?" "Sure, why not." And I awake to find.....

Silent snowfall, obscuring streetlights and far-off fire lights. "Oh, isn't it beautiful?" "Yea." Floating snow, shimmering low, touches my face, forms delicate lace. "The snow is sticking to you. You look funny!" "Yea." Moccasin shoes pad on to Clowes, left then right, in a silent world of snowing light. "I love to walk in the snow, don't you?" "Yes, it's nice." Black trees are white trees now. Bushes and grass in stillness have covers, wherein the summer rested two lovers. "Look at the trees with snow getting on the branches and stuff." "Yea, it's nice." And a single snowflake awoke me to find.....

Summer sun, between bushes and trees, plays on fleas, who raise

us to say, "Thank God the campus fuzz didn't find us like this. We shouldn't have fallen asleep." Sun-splattered green bushes bend away as she pushes. "Let's go, come on, I'm late, I've got to get to class." Books and papers: acolytes with tapers, pretending schools, playing by their rules. "I *must* get there on time. Hurry up!" Sun slides down, behind the town, steeple bells ring, the congregation sings, and this wakes me to find.....

Pencil and paper, a worn down eraser. An English theme, and a bathroom full of steam. Writing now, I'm back where I started. My, how my mind has darted. Now which, I ask, is real or not? They all are, and they all are not. And as I wake I think.....

Dreaming is reality while it is being dreamed, unreality while awake. "Reality" is reality now while awake, but it is unreality while dreaming. As we do not remember well the last night's dreams we do not remember this time while awake. So maybe, who knows, we are "dreaming" *now*, to wake up to a different reality when next we dream. Maybe being *awake* is the dream; maybe this whole life is only a dream. In three minutes I might wake up in a different galaxy, experiencing this life only as a figment of my computer's imagination; *maybe this whole world exists only in my imagination*. Who really knows, for *sure*?

A POEM

MARTHA MOLDT

Love dies, Martha.
He said.
And she, who clutched at Love
As the one constant in a tumbling world
Let go
And watched it spin away
Out of sight; an empty vessel,
Once full, once fragrant,
Carried for too long as an anchor
Attached to nothing.